

EXHIBIT 10
DATE 2/8/11
HB 361

House Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Committee:

I am writing in support of HB 361. This bill is aimed at correcting the actions of our current FWP Commission. Placing the archery elk-hunting in central and eastern Montana on a limited permit was not about game management. The goal is access to private land by bringing financial hardship to its owners. When the limited archery permits were put in place the stated reason "was to take away the certainty of a guaranteed client". Guaranteed clients are no longer possible with the passage of I-161.

Most of the people who will oppose this bill will say this is just a hunting issue and their heritage should be protected. But this is far more than just a hunting issue. It is a property rights and economic issue also. I am a landowner, rancher, and outfitter in Central Montana. Thirty years ago we did not have elk on our property, but over the years they were grown onto us by the FWP. After finding out that public hunting wasn't solving our elk problems, I began an outfitting business to offset the cost of having elk on our property and as a supplement to the ranch income. So having elk went from being a problem to being an asset. That was until the FWP Commission in 2007 decided to place limited permits on archery elk hunting and target the non-resident hunters. This change has cost Central and Eastern Montana about \$9 million in lost revenue. In 2010, these limited areas served only 4.5% of the 17,000 non-resident elk hunters allowed in the state.

The economic impact of limited archery permits to our small businesses and surrounding communities has been no different than the impact to Billings when a tornado tore the roof off Metra Park. When 9 million dollars of new money is taken from the economy, everyone suffers. You could say that HB 361 is our attempt at rebuilding. In 2010 my booked archery elk hunters were guaranteed a license, but I lost 50% of them in the limited permit drawing. This year they also have to draw for a license, so I could easily lose another 25% or more. That's income that not only helps keep my ranch in the black, it also gets spent at our local small businesses and employs local people.

If we are denied the opportunity to "put the roof back on" our businesses, the elk will go from being an asset back to just costing us money. Elk in Montana have grown from 50,000 in 1978 to 150,000 today; largely due to landowner tolerance. Landowner tolerance will not continue if there isn't a balance in who benefits from the elk.

This legislation is about more than just hunting, and I would urge your full support.

Mark Robbins
Rancher, Outfitter, and Sportsman
Roy, MT.

House Fish, Wildlife and Parks Committee:

I am writing in support of HB 361.

Four years ago when FWP proposed limited archery permits in the Missouri Breaks, I was serving on the Region 4 FWP Citizen Advisory Council, representing the Missouri Breaks area of Region 4. When I called the Region 4 biologist and asked him why in the world they would be considering limited archery permits in the face of over-objective elk populations, his reply to me was that they had to do something to stop the leasing and purchasing of land for its recreational opportunity.

Because the FWP wants to control all aspects of hunting, they resented the fact that private landowners could control who accessed private land to hunt, or could sell their land for its recreational opportunity. Non-residents are of course the most likely to pay for a fully guided hunt, or to purchase land for its recreational opportunity. FWP already had a limited rifle elk permit for biologic game management, which was perfectly acceptable to us. But they devised a limited archery elk permit to restrict non-resident participation to less than 10%, effectively crippling the leasing and purchasing of land for its recreational opportunity. It seems their theory was that if landowners such as ourselves were unable to profit from our access, we would give it away for free to resident strangers who coveted our elk hunting habitat.

Instead, what the limited archery permit has accomplished is to bring about considerable hard feelings between landowners, sportsmen, and FWP. It has resulted in the biggest loss of hunting opportunity in recent history. Using conservative numbers, it has been responsible for an economic loss of over 9 million dollars to central and eastern Montana. And it has treated landowners like me as an exception, taking the recreational value in our land while leaving it intact for those in areas without a limited archery permit, which the equal protection clause of our Constitution forbids.

Fish, Wildlife and Parks is supposed to be the department of game management. Instead, we have seen them grow themselves into the department of land management and the department of people management, all to the detriment of the hardworking citizens of Montana. HB 361 will be one step in getting them back to the department of game management.

I urge you to pass HB 361.

Deanna Robbins
Roy, MT



Charles Denowh <cdenowh@gmail.com>

HB-361

2 messages

Mark DeCock <maddeerhunter1@yahoo.com>

Mon, Feb 7, 2011 at 2:48 PM

To: info@unitedpropertyownersofmt.com

Committe Members:

As a Mt resident bowhunter i urge you to support HB-361.

Limited permits that were put in place for the 2008 season did nothing to help the local bowhunters. Reasoning behind these permits were to stop the tide of leasing and to devalue private land sold for hunting purposes. Public comment was ignored almost 2 to 1.

Besides the bowhunter the biggest loss was to the small communities of Eastern Mt. These include gas stations, taxidermy shops, meat processing facilities, motels, cafes and so on. The revenue lost to these communities was very big and to some of the people running these businesses it was the difference of them making a living or not.

With elk number objectives at or above normal i see no reason for having these permits. This year there will also be another 10% reduction in permits thus making it harder to draw and for what reasons? If it were a biological reason i have no problem with that. All of this to put in place a 10% cap on non-residents. The only people getting hurt are Mt bowhunters and small business owners of small towns in Mt.

Thanks for your time in reading this and many others. Once again i urge you to support this bill.

Respectfully Mark DeCock
Landowner, Rancher and Bowhunter.

Mark DeCock <maddeerhunter1@yahoo.com>

Mon, Feb 7, 2011 at 2:56 PM

To: info@unitedpropertyownersofmt.com



Charles Denowh <cdenowh@gmail.com>

HB361 & SB255

1 message

Mike <quesenberry1@peoplepc.com>

Mon, Feb 7, 2011 at 1:25 PM

To: "UPOM, Inc." <info@unitedpropertyownersofmt.com>

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to you for your support of HB361 & SB255. In passing these two bills, you will send a message of Game Management to MT. FWP.

As a land owner, and sportsman, I can tell you that these restrictions have nothing to do with game mgt.. But have effected local economies, land prices, and the ability to manage game properly.

Please support these new bills.

Mike Quesenberry
